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THE
HUGUENOT LEGACY
TO
IRELAND



Compiled by
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THE HUGUENOT LEGACY TO IRELAND

Lincoln

THE EMERALD ISLE, land of the Blarney Stone, Shamrock and the Leprechaun is of MUCH interest to visitors from North America. Large numbers of early Irish settlers took part in development of the United States and Canada. It is claimed that the ancestors of at LEAST 14 Presidents of the United States came from the Emerald Isle. The history of The Declaration of Independence is closely associated with men who came from Northern Ireland. In ADDITION to a NUMBER who SIGNED it, there were THOSE whose DUTY it was to WRITE OUT the document for the signatories, to PRINT IT for the FIRST time, and to READ it for the first time in PUBLIC.

I do not need to take up your TIME, to DWELL upon the REASON WHY the Huguenots ESCAPED from France. You are well GROUNDED in that tragic phase and fact. In time of flight, the keeping of statistics is SELDOM considered, therefore it is IMPOSSIBLE to reckon EXACTLY, but it was fairly well estimated that about 10,000 Huguenots were added to the Irish population, which in 1672, was 1,100,000, of which 800,000 were Catholics, 100,000 Episcopalian, 200,000 were of Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Independents and Quakers, . . . so the 10,000 Huguenots were a small percentage.

Ireland was VERY HOSPITABLE; Irish people of all PERSUASIONS REJOICED at the COMING of the HUGUENOTS. There were 4 Irish Acts of Parliament for ENCOURAGING "Protestant STRANGERS and OTHERS," The FIRST one was in 1662, and was valid for 7 years. There were some who saw in the Huguenot immigration one of the SUREST WAYS of prospering the country. They settled MOSTLY in and around cities.

Waterford and Portarlington were centers for the MILITARY. At ONE TIME, there were 1,763 Huguenots in DIFFERENT PROFESSIONS in the city of DUBLIN, ALONE.

THE MILITARY

By far the greatest number of Huguenots that left France in the latter part of the 1600s, went to HOLLAND, this being the nearest country of refuge where a Protestant people welcomed Protestant exiles. The WEALTHY Huguenots FLED, while the POOR Huguenots had to REMAIN in France and put up with the dreadful situation, as best they could.

With King William of Orange, himself a Calvinist, no people were more welcome. He became their life long protector and friend. He even chose a Huguenot, Louis FLEURY, one of his private Chaplains, and ANOTHER, Seigneur De Bayeau Saint-Jean, to be one of his body guards. And William of Orange could not forget that HE, HIMSELF, descended from a daughter of ADMIRAL COLIGNY, the former leader of the Huguenots in France. These Huguenots gladly went with their King William when he was offered the throne of England. It GAVE the Huguenot SOLDIERS a SUPERBLY,

DELIGHTFUL FEELING that they would RELISH fighting against Catholic James II, whose cause was being supported by the French Roman Catholics, former PERSECUTORS of the HUGUENOTS. These Huguenot Refugees were conspicuous in their joining up with Protestant Danes, Dutch, German, English and French, ALL GLAD TO FIGHT in the army to help William of Orange, secure the English Throne. ONE THIRD of William's ARMY and 736 of his OFFICERS were HUGUENOTS, and, the GREATEST officer he HAD was Huguenot Frederick, Duke of Schomberg, who was killed at the desperate Battle of The Boyne, in 1690. So great was William's confidence in this GREAT Huguenot General, that he made SCHOMBERG, 2nd in Command in this Irish Campaign, while the QUEEN actually gave Schomberg *secret* instructions to ASSERT HER RIGHTS in the event of her HUSBAND'S falling in BATTLE. The Great Huguenot Schomberg was 81, he PERSONALLY LED HIS MEN, and inspired them to deeds of SUPERB valor. Today, a fine monument to him, stands in St. Patrick's Cathedral, in Dublin, close by The Lady Chapel where his fellow Huguenots had been worshiping for 24 years. Dean Swift composed the beautiful inscription upon the imposing black marble slab placed over his burial place and dedicated to him.

King William LED HIS MEN, and WON THE DECISIVE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE; James II (The Jacobite) watched his men from a distance, and in defeat, fled to France. One of his defeated soldiers called across the narrow Boyne river, "Trade Kings with us and we'll FIGHT YOU ALL OVER AGAIN." William and Mary NOW ascended the English Throne. The majority of the military came to live at Portarlinton which was a military post. Up to the year 1700, English Military Records mentioned, year after year, "The three French Regiments of FOOT." Later, no less than 590 pensioners with Huguenot NAMES were on King William's list of PENSIONERS.

BANKING

Industry must of necessity be bound up with finance, so it seems proper to consider Huguenot Banking. When William III (William of Orange) landed in Ireland, he had with him, David Dignes le Touche, who fought at The Boyne, in 1690, (about the date when the Capitol of Virginia was moved from Jamestown to Williamsburg). When victory was complete, Le Touche subsequently settled in Dublin, and established a successful BANK in Castle Street, patronized by the Nobility and gentry. In the mid 1700s its book balances were 2,000,000 POUNDS, and when OTHER banks were going BANKRUPT, that of Le Touche remained strong and prosperous. He died October 10, 1745, while at PRAYER in a Castle Street Chapel, and was buried in The Huguenot Graveyard in Cathedral Lane. His son and grandson followed him as presidents of this bank, which served its clients for 170 years. There were other successful French banks, but this one was a fine pattern.

Like us of today, Ireland had housing problems; in Portarlinton, Lord Galway of Huguenot ancestry, built 100 houses for 130 French Refugee families.

INDUSTRY

Linen was woven in Ireland before the arrival of the Huguenots, but owing to the jealousy of the English people, and troublous times, it ceased to function. After King William III's position on the throne of England was SECURE, he saw that the ONE way to revive the linen trade in Ireland was by giving it into the experienced hands of the HUGUENOTS. The KING took it into his OWN HANDS, by personally inviting Louis CROMMELIN, a Huguenot residing in HOLLAND, to come to Ireland and establish the linen trade on a FIRM BASIS. An act was passed in Parliament in 1697 to ENCOURAGE it. Originally, Crommelin came from Armond-Court, in Picardy, which was celebrated for its FINE LINENS. He brought 70 families from Holland and France. He chose the town of Lisburn as the best center. He put 10,000 POUNDS of his own money into it, showing his confidence and ENTHUSIASM in the project, established "The Royal Linen Manufactory of Ireland," and as overseer received 200 POUNDS per annum and 8% of production for 12 years. He disapproved of spinning wheels of Ireland run by FOOT, he insisted on a BETTER ONE, used in France, which was run by HAND. Linen manufacture in the North of Ireland was more successful than that in Southern Ireland. The reason was psychological; the Huguenots were a people of energy and industry, and they found in the Protestants in North Ireland, a people akin to their own nature, with whom they could work and share their knowledge. When these two factors were present, the success of the venture was guaranteed.

Other leaders in Linen Manufacture were Jean La Trobe, Julius Besnard, Daniel Chappel, Wm. La Fanu, and others, 50 more families came to join the linen weavers. About 500 Huguenots worked in this flourishing business by the mid 1700s.

Various groups engaged in weaving of Poplin and Cambric, a very fine, thin linen, in Dundalb, and in Waterford two brothers named VASHON manufactured sail cloth, very useful in the Napoleonic Wars. Brewing and wine making were thriving industries. In Dublin, 1400 Silk Looms employed 11,000 hands, and the silk industry received every support from Parliament. A Miss La Touche had a lace making center in County Carlow. And a man named Claude Duplaix advertised that he manufactured SILVER LACE.

Goldsmiths were in Cork and Dublin. Very few Irish engaged in this delicate and beautiful work, but from 1710 to 1780, 78 Huguenot NAMES are found working in the goldsmith and jewelry trade. Carpeting was made by the Huguenots in Innishannon in County Cork, and in Dublin a destitute Huguenot is found making button molds. John Jaffie was a Master Cooper in Cork. A Huguenot boot-maker was found in Portarlinton. Reverend James Fontaine of Cork was a warden of a Cordwainers Company in 1710 and Master in 1720.

Some beautiful wood-carving by a Huguenot still exists in the lovely woodwork in the chapel in Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin.

As early as 1623, a Huguenot, Abraham Bigoe, was found setting up a Glassworks, near the town of Birr, in Affaly, all sorts of window-glass and drinking glasses, later his son-in-law, Hennezel, carried on with it in Portarlinton.

To a Huguenot, Jean Du Bedat, goes the honor of establishing the FIRST SUGAR REFINERY in Ireland.

Now, Garden Club members, listen to THIS: Among the Shamrocks and silver lakes, the Huguenots were FIRST to bring THE ROSE GARDEN TO IRELAND. Nothing of note had ever been done in Ireland along the line of Horticulture, but the artistic French refugees were capable and able. They displayed flowers in quaint knots, developed exotic blooms, designed geometric plots of flowers edged with Box, like such as you see in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, today. They formed the FIRST "FLORAL CLUB" in Ireland which met for many years in Rose Tavern in Drumcondra Lane, with handsome prizes given to members who could exhibit the most beautiful flowers. It is of interest to know that the French Huguenots introduced the Irish to the garden shears, which some called "That Infernal Machine," trimming Box to resemble animals and birds and so on.

CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Being a very versatile people, although a Frenchman's love of country is RENOWNED, he is surprisingly quick to adapt himself to other lands and customs when it is necessary. No matter how foreign the surroundings, he will not be a stranger long. These refugees lived in Ireland over 100 years, 3 or 4 generations of Huguenots, were truly integrated, many were elected to Parliament, were in the arts, cultural centers, were musicians, painters and doctors; (one especially interesting was Dr. John LaNauz, who is listed in Kentucky's ancestor list).

Otto Zoff said, "With a Frenchman's taste and his sense of quality, every Huguenot naturally became a messenger of civilization," for instance, one Le Febure maintained a French Academy in Cork, and the founding of schools and colleges was one of the main ideas of Lord Galway. In Portarlinton, 16 schools were conducted by Huguenots. Most of the children were French, but many of the students came from all over Ireland in order to get a "CONTINENTAL EDUCATION." Portarlinton was known as "The Athens of Ireland." In Dublin, Reverend Jacques de Fontaine, an ancestor in your membership list, taught a classical school with lessons in French, Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Drawing and military subjects, such as the art of fortification. An old Dublin historian wrote, "Their names are to be found among all our religious and charitable institutions. WHO does not KNOW, and KNOWING, not PRAISE?"

THE CHURCHES

Finally, . . . the GREATEST and MOST LASTING of ALL contributions which the HUGUENOTS MADE to the LIFE and WELL BEING of Ireland, was made in the realm of CHARACTER which springs from RELIGIOUS FAITH. In France the writings of the Roman Catholics stigmatized the Huguenots as 'Heretics,' 'Atheists' and 'Blasphemers,' but not a word in all their writings has *ever been seen* where they found any FAULT with the MORALITY and INTEGRITY of CHARACTER of the HUGUENOTS. These happy, industrious and energetic people harmonized in a fine way with the Irish who were ALSO known as a happy and cheerful people.

As soon as there was any concentration of Huguenots in any one place, steps were immediately taken to have worship conducted by one of their ministers. The House of Commons passed Acts to endow a foreign clergyman in every parish where Protestant foreigners exceeded 50, in order that religious worship might be performed in their own language. The FIRST such congregation was formed in Dublin in 1666; there were 4 Huguenot Churches THERE, 2 in Cork, others in Lisburn, Portarlinton, Carlow, and Waterford. Dozens of other towns had small groups with ministers, meeting in private homes, or in Courthouses or borrowed buildings. You will be interested in SOME of the 114 ministers' NAMES, Jacques Hirome, James Fontaine, Louis Saurin, John A'Lasco, Moyse Viredet, Pascal Ducasse, Thomas Whitshed, ancestor of Parnell, Joseph Lagacherie, Reverend M. Pons, and others. These preached in the French language for 122 years in such Churches as The Lady Chapel of St. Patrick's Cathedral, an annex to that beautiful church, also in St. Mary's Chapel, in the Chapter House of Mary's Abbey, in Chapel Street in Dublin, and others. Their Cemeteries with *name* over the gate, can be found today. A burial as late as 1901 took place in Merrion Row Cemetery in Stephen's Green, in Dublin, and the last interment in The Peters Street Huguenot Cemetery, was in 1879, in Dublin.

A French Refugee's Charitable Society still exists, in Dublin, in Kildare St., to assist needy descendants of those Huguenots who came to Dublin, so long, long ago. The benevolent fund is also dispensed to OTHER STRANGERS IN NEED.

In Portarlinton, after 135 years, even the NOTICE BOARD of St. Paul's Church bears the name, "THE FRENCH CHURCH," and the 2 Registers are written in French. I suggest that when you go to Ireland, you visit THIS CHURCH. The last Huguenot to hold office there, was Charles de Vignoles, whose ministry ended in 1841. There, the Alms Dish and Communion Vessels, used today, have the inscription, all in French, "*Honi soit qui mal pense ici Dieu*," presented to them in 1715 by Caroline, Princess of Wales, later wife of King George II, and on the Church wall, a memorial tablet to Thomas Bowen DesVoeux, grandson of the Reverend A. V. DesVoeux, pastor here from 1767 to 1793, . . . 26 years.

Another Church, LISBURN CATHEDRAL, where Reverend Du Saumares Du Bourdieu preached for 50 years and taught a Classical School for 56 years, can be visited today, where you may view the very fine bust and memorial to him, erected by his grateful pupils in 1798.

John Wesley, THE GREAT METHODIST, and his wife, a Huguenot, attended Huguenot services in Ireland, and just before he departed from Ireland for good, the Wesleys dined with the *D'Oilers family* on Sunday, July 12, 1789, about 100 years before the oldest person in this room was born.

In old Irish farm houses, one may still see on the book shelves a French Bible, on the fly-leaf we may still trace the name of the refugee in faded ink, browned from age, illegible from time and perhaps from tears. These words from Reverend S. J. KNOX, a great writer of today, on Huguenots in Ireland, quotes an Irish historian in the mid 1700s, with an intimate knowledge of all that the Huguenots had accomplished for his country, said, "Was it not God and his faithful servants, The French Protestants, that poured the present blessings on us? The happy fact is too apparent to need a proof." Reverend Knox again quotes another philosopher: "We shall not forget the HUGUENOTS. In THEM the Combination of Warlike and industrious mind, of refined manners and Christian SEVERITY never appeared in a more BEAUTIFUL LIGHT."



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J. C. Walker's "Essay on Rise and Progress of Gardening in Ireland"

D. C. A. Agnew, on "Protestant Exiles From France"

Various other Source Material

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